Week 2: Introduction To R Programming

Journalism 303: R functions and objects

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R Programming

R is a versatile language for data wrangling, visualization, and modeling

Resources

Link to slides

https://mjfrigaard.github.io/csuc-data-journalism/slides.html

Link to exercises

https://mjfrigaard.github.io/csuc-data-journalism/lessons-exercises.html

Getting Started

Image credit: R Project

Installing R

Install R from the Comprehensive R Archive Network (CRAN):

https://cran.r-project.org/



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The Comprehensive R Archive Network

Download and Install R

Precompiled binary distributions of the base system and contributed packages, Windows and Mac users most likely want one of these versions of R:

- Download R for Linux
- Download R for (Mac) OS X
- Download R for Windows

R is part of many Linux distributions, you should check with your Linux package management system in addition to the link above.

Windows and Mac users most likely want to download the precompiled binaries listed in the upper box, not the source code. The sources have to be compiled before you can use them. If you do not know what this means, you probably do not want to do it!

- The latest release (2020-06-22, Taking Off Again) R-4.0.2.tar.gz, read what's new in the latest version.
- Sources of R alpha and beta releases (daily snapshots, created only in time periods before a planned release).
- Daily snapshots of current patched and development versions are <u>available here</u>. Please read about <u>new features and bug fixes</u> before filing corresponding feature requests or bug reports.
- Source code of older versions of R is available here.
- Contributed extension <u>packages</u>

Ouestions About R

• If you have questions about R like how to download and install the software, or what the license terms are, please read our <u>answers to frequently asked questions</u> before you send an email.

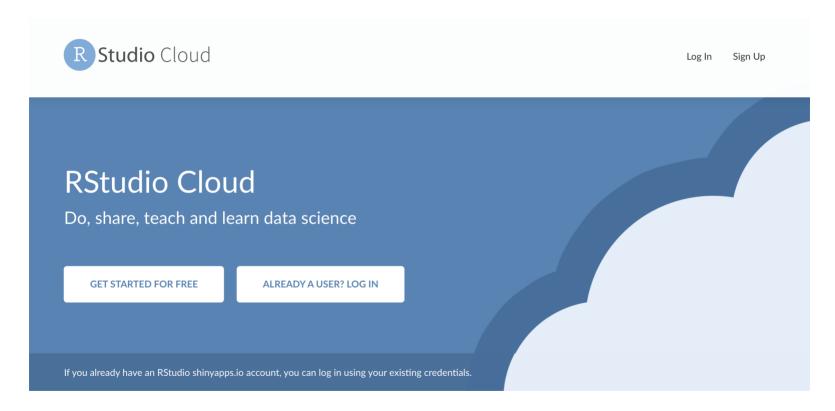
Download RStudio

https://rstudio.com/products/rstudio/download/

os	Download	Size	SHA-256
Windows 10/8/7	▲ RStudio-1.3.1093.exe	171.62 MB	62b9e60a
macOS 10.13+	▲ RStudio-1.3.1093.dmg	148.66 MB	bdc4d3a4
Ubuntu 16		124.33 MB	72f05048
Ubuntu 18/Debian 10	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-amd64.deb	126.80 MB	ff222177
Fedora 19/Red Hat 7	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-x86_64.rpm	146.96 MB	ed1f6ef8
Fedora 28/Red Hat 8	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-x86_64.rpm	151.05 MB	01a978f3
Debian 9	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-amd64.deb	127.00 MB	a747f9f9
SLES/OpenSUSE 12	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-x86_64.rpm	119.43 MB	5016cbcf
OpenSUSE 15	★ rstudio-1.3.1093-x86_64.rpm	128.40 MB	cf47e32d

Or use RStudio.Cloud

https://rstudio.cloud/





R version 4.0.2 (2020-06-22) -- "Taking Off Again" Copyright (C) 2020 The R Foundation for Statistical Computing Platform: x86_64-apple-darwin17.0 (64-bit)

R is free software and comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY. You are welcome to redistribute it under certain conditions. Type 'license()' or 'licence()' for distribution details.

Natural language support but running in an English locale

R is a collaborative project with many contributors.

Type 'contributors()' for more information and 'citation()' on how to cite R or R packages in publications.

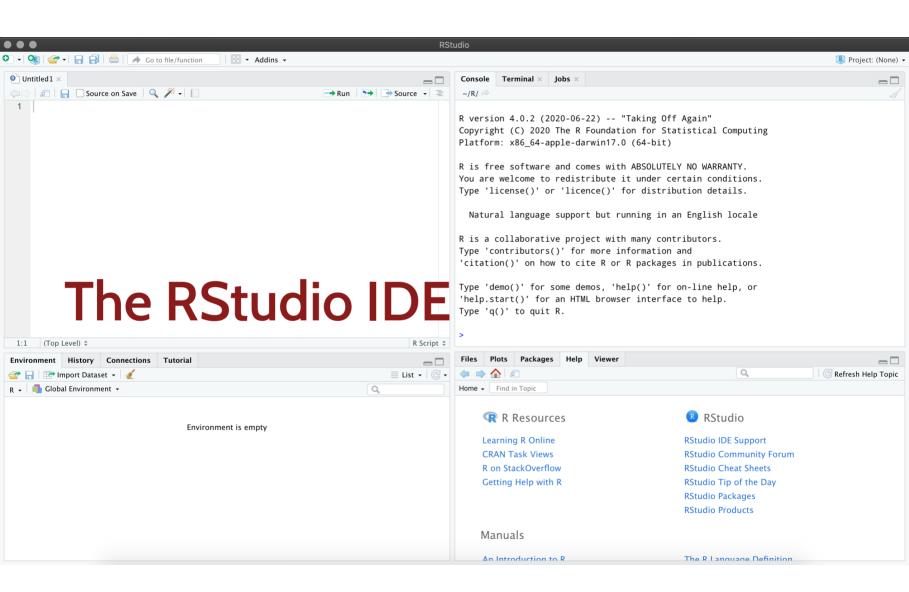
Type 'demo()' for some demos, 'help()' for on-line help, or 'help.start()' for an HTML browser interface to help.

Type 'q()' to quit R.

[R.app GUI 1.72 (7847) x86_64-apple-darwin17.0]

>

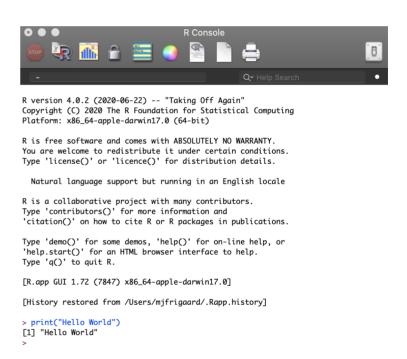
The R Console



Running R Commands

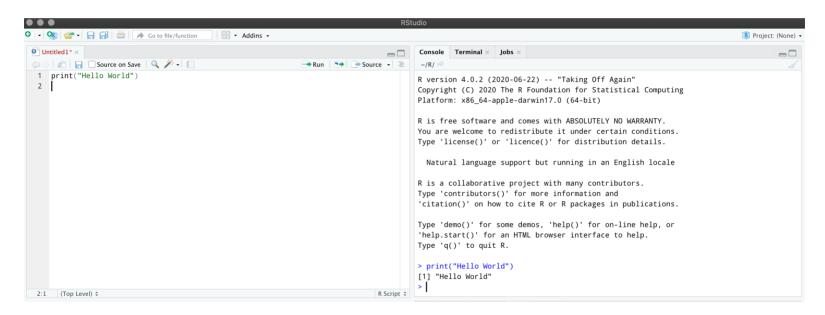
You can run R commands in the Console by entering them after the > operator (see example in R below)

```
print("Hello World")
## [1] "Hello World"
```



Running R Commands

You can also run them in R scripts (see example in RStudio below)



R Syntax

The R syntax is comprised of two major elements:

Functions

Functions perform operations: calculate a mean, build a table, create a graph, etc.

Objects

Objects hold information: a collection of numbers, dates, words, models results, etc.

We use functions to perform operations on objects

Example: create a vector of numbers

The standard assignment operator in R is <-. We can use this in combination with c() to create an object x, which contains five numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, 9).

```
x \leftarrow c(1, 3, 5, 7, 9)
```

Place x inside print() to print x to the console

```
x <- c(1, 3, 5, 7, 9)
print(x)
```

NOTE: We can also use the = and move -> to the end of the expression, but this is not recommended

R Syntax: functions

```
x <- c(1, 3, 5, 7, 9)
print(x)
```

```
## [1] 1 3 5 7 9
```

[1] "function"

In the example above, we've created object x, but what are <- and c()?

We can check this by passing them both in backticks to the class() function below.

```
class(`<-`)
## [1] "function"

class(`c`)</pre>
```

As we can see, these are **functions**.

Functions in R

Objects are like nouns: they hold information

```
object_1 <- "Sally"
object_2 <- "dog"
object_3 <- "road"</pre>
```

Functions are like verbs: they do things to nouns

```
work()
run()
implement()
```

Functions perform operations (calculate, transform, model, graph) on various objects that contain information (blood pressure measurements, monthly sales, political party affiliation, etc.)

Functions and objects

Functions perform operations on objects.

Sally works.

```
object_1 <- "Sally"
work(object_1)</pre>
```

The dog runs.

```
object_2 <- "dog"
run(object_2)</pre>
```

Implement the idea.

```
object_3 <- "idea"
implement(object_3)</pre>
```

Packages and functions in R

Functions are stored in R packages. Fortunately, R comes 'out-of-the-box' with a set of functions for basic data management and statistical calculations.

To access the functions in a package, use the following syntax:

```
package::function(object)
```

The median() function comes from the stats package.

```
stats::median(x)
```

[1] 5

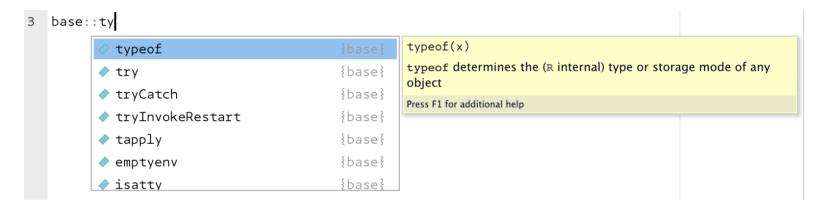
The typeof() function comes from the base package.

```
base::typeof(x)
```

```
## [1] "double"
```

Packages and functions

Use tab-completion and the arrow keys in RStudio to explore a packages functions.



We can take advantage of tab-completion by using names that allow us to look up common objects. For example, naming plot objects with a plot_ prefix will allow us to use tab-completion to scroll through each object without having to remember the specific name.

Installing packages from CRAN

To install packages from CRAN, we can use the install.packages() function.

```
install.packages("package name")
```

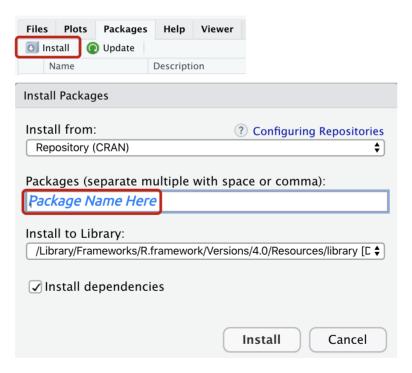
NOTE: if this is the first time installing packages, you'll probably be presented with a list of CRAN "mirrors" to use--choose the mirror closest to you.

To load the package into your environment, use library(package name)

```
library(package name)
```

Installing packages from CRAN in RStudio

You can also use the **Packages** pane in RStudio



Installing user packages

The code for user-written packages are typically stored in code repository, like Github.

To access all of the great user-created packages for R that haven't been uploaded to CRAN, you'll need to install the devtools or remotes packages.

```
install.packages("devtools")
install.packages("remotes")
```

To install these packages, we can use devtools::install_github() or remotes::install_github(), and then the author's username and name of the package repository.

```
devtools::install_github(<username>/<package>)
remotes::install_github(<username>/<package>)
```

NOTE: you will need an internet connection to load packages

Objects

R is typically referred to as an "object-oriented programming" language

We've covered functions, so now we'll dive into the aspects of some common R objects

Types of objects in R

Vectors

- atomic (logical, integer, double, and character)
- S3 (factors, dates, date-times, durations)

Matrices

two dimensional objects

Arrays

- multidimensional objects
- Data frames & tibbles
 - rectangular objects
- Lists
 - recursive objects

Atomic vectors

Vectors are the fundamental data type in R.

Many of R's functions are *vectorised*, which means they're designed for performing operations on vectors.

The "atomic" in atomic vectors means, "of or forming a single irreducible unit or component in a larger system."

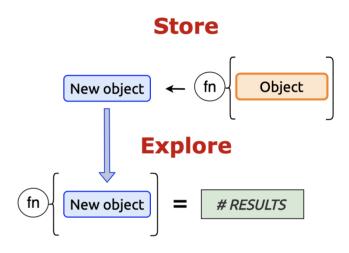
Atomic vectors can be logical, integer, double, or character (strings).

We will build each of these vectors using the previously covered assignment operator (<-) and c() function (which stands for 'combine').

Store and explore

A common practice in R is to create an object, perform an operation on that object with a function, and store the results in new object.

We then explore the contents of the new object with another function.



Many of the functions in R are written with this *store and explore* process in mind.

Atomic vectors: numeric

The two atomic numeric vectors are integer and double.

Integer vectors are created with a number and capital letter L (i.e. 1L, 10L)

```
vec_integer <- c(1L, 10L, 100L)
```

Double vectors can be entered as decimals, but they can also be created in scientific notation (2.46e8), or values determined by the floating point standard (Inf, -Inf and NaN).

```
vec_double <- c(0.1, 1.0, 10.01)
```

Atomic vectors: numeric

We will use the typeof() and is.numeric() functions to explore the contents of vec_integer and vec_double.

```
typeof(vec_integer)

## [1] "integer"

is.numeric(vec_integer)

## [1] TRUE

typeof() tells us that this is an "integer" vector, and is.numeric() tests to see if it is numeric (which is TRUE).
```

Atomic vectors: logical vectors

Logical vectors can be TRUE or FALSE (or T or F for short). Below we use typeof() and is.logical() to explore the contents of vec_logical.

```
vec_logical <- c(TRUE, FALSE)
typeof(vec_logical)

## [1] "logical"

is.logical(vec_logical)

## [1] TRUE</pre>
```

Atomic vectors: logical vectors

Logical vectors are handy because when we add them together, and the total number tells us how many TRUE values there are.

```
TRUE + TRUE + FALSE + TRUE
## [1] 3
```

Logical vectors can be useful for subsetting (a way of extracting certain elements from a particular object) based on a set of conditions.

How many elements in vec_integer are greater than 5?

```
vec_integer > 5
## [1] FALSE TRUE TRUE
```

Atomic vectors: character vectors

Character vectors store text data (note the double quotes). We'll *store and explore* again.

```
vec_character <- c("A", "B", "C")
typeof(vec_character)

## [1] "character"

is.character(vec_character)

## [1] TRUE</pre>
```

Character vectors typically store text information that we need to include in a calculation, visualization, or model. In these cases, we'll need to convert them into factors. We'll cover those next.

S3 vectors

S3 vectors can be factors, dates, date-times, and difftimes.

S3 vectors: factors

Factors are categorical vectors with a given set of responses. Below we create a factor with three levels: low, medium, and high

```
vec_factor <- factor(x = c("low", "medium", "high"))
class(vec_factor)
## [1] "factor"</pre>
```

Factors are not character variables, though. They get stored with an integer indicator for each character level.

```
typeof(vec_factor)
```

```
## [1] "integer"
```

S3 vectors: factor attributes

Factors are integer vectors with two additional attributes: class is set to factor, and levels for each unique response.

We can check this with unique() and attributes() functions.

```
unique(vec_factor)

## [1] low    medium high

## Levels: high low medium

attributes(vec_factor)

## $levels

## [1] "high" "low" "medium"

## ## $class
## [1] "factor"
```

S3 vectors: factor attributes

Levels are assigned alphabetically, but we can manually assign the order of factor levels with the levels argument in factor().

We can check the levels with levels() or unclass()

```
levels(vec_factor)

## [1] "low"    "medium" "high"

unclass(vec_factor)

## [1] 2 3 1

## attr(,"levels")

## [1] "low"    "medium" "high"
```

S3 vectors: date

Dates are stored as double vectors with a class attribute set to Date.

R has a function for getting today's date, Sys.Date(). We'll create a vec_date using Sys.Date() and adding 1 and 2 to this value.

```
vec_date <- c(Sys.Date(), Sys.Date() + 1, Sys.Date() + 2)
vec_date</pre>
```

```
## [1] "2021-08-25" "2021-08-26" "2021-08-27"
```

We can see adding units to the Sys.Date() added days to today's date.

The attributes() function tells us this vector has it's own class.

```
attributes(vec_date)

## $class
## [1] "Date"
```

S3 vectors: date calculations

Dates are stored as a number because they represent the amount of days since January 1, 1970, which is referred to as the UNIX Epoch.

unclass() tells us what the actual number is.

```
unclass(vec_date)
```

[1] 18864 18865 18866

S3 vectors: date-time

Date-times contain a bit more information than dates. The function to create a datetime vector is as.POSIXct().

We'll convert vec_date to a date-time and store it in vec_datetime_ct. View the results below.

```
vec_date
## [1] "2021-08-25" "2021-08-26" "2021-08-27"

vec_datetime_ct <- as.POSIXct(x = vec_date)
vec_datetime_ct
## [1] "2021-08-24 17:00:00 MST" "2021-08-25 17:00:00 MST"
## [3] "2021-08-26 17:00:00 MST"</pre>
```

We can see vec_datetime_ct stores some additional information.

S3 vectors: date-time attributes

vec_datetime_ct is a double vector with an additional attribute of class set to
"POSIXct" "POSIXt".

```
typeof(vec_datetime_ct)

## [1] "double"

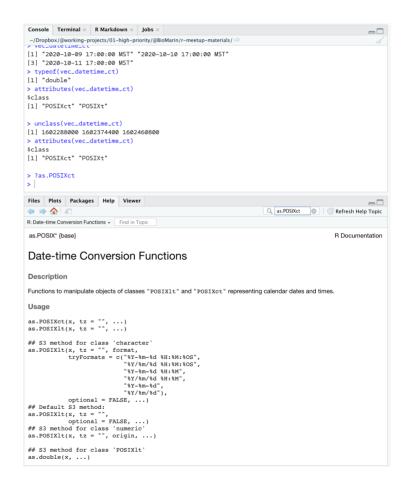
attributes(vec_datetime_ct)

## $class
## [1] "POSIXct" "POSIXt"
```

S3 vectors: date-time help

Read more about date-times by entering the as. POSIXct function into the console preceded by a question mark.

?as.POSIXct



S3 vectors: difftime

Difftimes are durations, so we need to supply two dates, which we will create with time_01 and time_02.

```
time_01 <- Sys.Date()
time_02 <- Sys.Date() + 10
vec_difftime <- difftime(time_01, time_02, units = "days")
vec_difftime</pre>
```

Time difference of -10 days

Difftimes are stored as a double vector.

```
typeof(vec_difftime)
```

[1] "double"

S3 vectors: difftime attributes

Difftimes are their own class and have a units attribute set to whatever we've specified in the units argument.

```
attributes(vec_difftime)

## $class
## [1] "difftime"
##
## $units
## [1] "days"
```

We can see the actual number stored in the vector with unclass()

```
unclass(vec_difftime)

## [1] -10

## attr(,"units")

## [1] "days"
```

Matrices

A matrix is several vectors stored together into two a two-dimensional object.

```
## [,1] [,2]
## [1,] 0.10 1
## [2,] 1.00 10
## [3,] 10.01 100
```

This is a three-column, two-row matrix.

We can check the dimensions of mat_data with dim().

```
dim(mat_data)
```

```
## [1] 3 2
```

Matrix positions

The output in the console tells us where each element is located in mat_data.

For example, if I want to get the 10 that's stored in vec_integer, I can use look at the output and use the indexes.

```
mat_data

## [,1] [,2] ## [1] 10

## [1,] 0.10 1

## [2,] 1.00 10

## [3,] 10.01 100

mat_data[2, 2]

## [1] 10
```

By placing the index ([2, 2]) next to the object, I am telling R, "only return the value in this position".

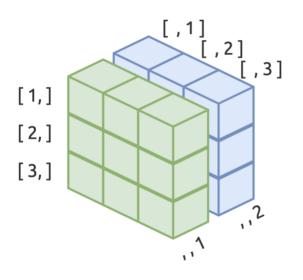
Arrays

Arrays are like matrices, but they can have more dimensions.

Array layers

dat_array contains numbers 1 through 18 in three columns and three rows, stacked in two *layers*.

Matrices are arrays, but arrays are not matrices.



```
class(dat_array)

## [1] "array"

class(mat_data)

## [1] "matrix" "array"
```

Data Frames

Data frames are rectangular data with rows and columns (or observations and variables).

NOTE: stringsAsFactors = FALSE is not required as of R version 4.0.0.

Data Frames

Check the structure of the data.frame with str()

```
## 'data.frame': 3 obs. of 3 variables:
## $ character: chr "A" "B" "C"
## $ integer : num 0.1 1 10
## $ logical : logi TRUE FALSE TRUE

str() gives us a transposed view of the DataFrame object, and tells us the
```

str() gives us a transposed view of the DataFrame object, and tells us the dimensions of the object.

Tibbles

Tibbles are a special kind of data. frame (they print better to the console and character vectors are never coerced into factors).

The syntax to build them is slightly different, too.

Tibbles

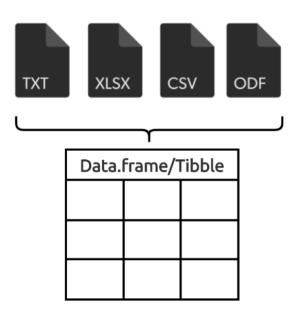
Check the structure of Tibble.

```
## tibble [3 × 3] (S3: tbl_df/tbl/data.frame)
## $ character: chr [1:3] "A" "B" "C"
## $ integer : num [1:3] 0.1 1 10
## $ logical : logi [1:3] TRUE FALSE TRUE

str() tells us tibbles are $3 objects, with types tbl_df, tbl, and data.frame.
```

Data frames and tibbles

If you're importing spreadsheets, most of the work you'll do in R will be with rectangular data objects (i.e. data.frames and tibbles).



These are the common rectangular data storage object for tabular data in R

Data frames & tibbles

```
Tibble
DataFrame
                         ## # A tibble: 3 × 3
##
   character integer logical
## 1
        A 0.10 TRUE ## character integer logical
## 2
        C 10.01 TRUE
                         ## 1 A
                                      0.1 TRUE
## 3
                         ## 2 B
                                        FALSE
                         ## 3 C
                                     10.0 TRUE
```

If we check the type of the DataFrame and Tibble...

```
typeof(DataFrame)

## [1] "list"

typeof(Tibble)

## [1] "list"
```

Data Frames & Tibbles

Both data. frames and tibbles are their own class,

```
class(DataFrame)

## [1] "data.frame"

class(Tibble)

## [1] "tbl_df" "tbl" "data.frame"
```

So we can think of data. frames and tibbles as special kinds of rectangular lists, made with different types of vectors, with each vector being of equal length.

Lists

Lists are special objects because they can contain all other objects (including other lists).

Lists have a names attribute, which we've defined above in double quotes.

```
attributes(dat_list)

## $names

## [1] "integer" "array" "matrix data" "data frame" "tibble"
```

List structure

If we check the structure of the dat_list, we see the structure of list, and the structure of the elements in the list.

```
## List of 5
## $ integer : int [1:3] 1 10 100
## $ array : num [1:3, 1:3, 1:2] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ...
## $ matrix data: num [1:3, 1:2] 0.1 1 10 1 10 ...
## $ data frame :'data.frame': 3 obs. of 3 variables:
## ..$ character: chr [1:3] "A" "B" "C"
## ..$ integer : num [1:3] 0.1 1 10
## ..$ logical : logi [1:3] TRUE FALSE TRUE
## $ tibble : tibble [3 × 3] (S3: tbl_df/tbl/data.frame)
## ..$ character: chr [1:3] "A" "B" "C"
## ..$ integer : num [1:3] 0.1 1 10
## ..$ logical : logi [1:3] TRUE FALSE TRUE
```

Recap

In R, two major elements: functions and objects.

• functions are verbs, objects are nouns

Packages: use install.packages() and library() to load functions from packages

 or devtools::install_github(<username>/<package>) or remotes::install_github(<username>/<package>)

The most common R object is a vector

- Atomic vectors: *logical, integer, double, or character (strings)*
- S3 vectors: factors, dates, date-times, and difftimes

Recap, cont.

More complicated data structures: matrices and arrays

- Matrix: two-dimensional object
- Array: multidimensional object

Rectangular data structures:

• data. frames & tibbles are special kinds of rectangular lists, which can hold different types of vectors, with each vector being of equal length

Catch-all data structures:

lists can contain all other objects (including other lists)

More resources

Learn more about R objects in the help files or the following online texts:

- 1. R for Data Science
- 2. Advanced R
- 3. Hands on Programming with R
- 4. R Language Definition

THANK YOU!

Feedback

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